

Language Teaching and Educational Research

e-ISSN 2636-8102

Volume 2, Issue 1 | 2019

Perceptions of Turkish EFL Student Teachers Towards Learning Phrasal-prepositional Verbs Through Corpus-Based Materials

Ufuk Girgin

To cite this article:

Girgin, U. (2019). Perceptions of Turkish EFL student teachers towards learning phrasal-prepositional verbs through corpus-based materials. *Language Teaching and Educational Research (LATER)*, 2(1), 1-19. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35207/later.526730>

View the journal website



Submit your article to *LATER*



Contact editor



Copyright (c) 2019 *LATER* and the author(s). This is an open access article under CC BY-NC-ND license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

Research Article

Perceptions of Turkish EFL student teachers towards learning phrasal-prepositional verbs through corpus-based materials¹

Ufuk Girgin² 

PhD, Research Assistant, Erciyes University, Faculty of Education, TURKEY

Abstract

The current study aims to explore the perceptions of 55 Turkish EFL student teachers towards using corpus-based materials in English phrasal-prepositional verb learning. It also explores gender-based differences and similarities towards using such materials in the learning of English phrasal-prepositional verbs. To do so, the study adopted a mixed method approach. The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire, and the qualitative data were collected through focus-group interviews. The results of the questionnaire revealed that the learners had somewhat positive perceptions of using corpus-based materials in their phrasal-prepositional verb learning. The results of the interviews also showed that the learners enjoyed using corpus-based materials in their phrasal-prepositional verb learning, thereby supporting the questionnaire data. Gender differences that emerged from the study showed that the female learners had higher positive perceptions of using corpus-based materials than the male learners. This study provides further evidence that Turkish EFL learners feel that using corpora in language learning is an effective approach, and language teachers questioning whether to use corpora in language teaching can make use of such sources to help their students learn different aspects of vocabulary in English.

Received
13 February 2019

Accepted
19 March 2019

Keywords

corpora
corpus-based materials
phrasal-prepositional verbs
gender differences

Suggested APA citation: Girgin, U. (2019). Perceptions of Turkish EFL student teachers towards learning phrasal-prepositional verbs through corpus-based materials. *Language Teaching and Educational Research (LATER)*, 2(1), 1-19.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35207/later.526730>

¹ For the study, an adapted version of the questionnaire which was developed and used before by the Author (2011) was used with some modifications that serve the needs of the study.

² Corresponding Author (✉ ufukgirgin@erciyes.edu.tr)

İngiliz dili ve eğitimi anabilim dalı öğrencilerinin edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanmalarına karşı olan tutumları

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngiliz dili ve eğitimi anabilim dalında öğrenim gören 55 Türk öğrencinin üç kelimedenden oluşan edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanmalarına karşı olan tutumlarını anlayabilmektir. Çalışmanın diğer bir amacı da üç kelimedenden oluşan edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanılmasına karşı geliştirilen öğrenci tutumlarının cinsiyete göre dağılımını belirlemektir. Bu çalışmadaki veri anket uygulamasından gelmektedir. Çalışmadaki diğer veri ise öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. Katılımcı öğrencilerin tutum anketine verdikleri yanıtların istatistiksel analizi göstermiştir ki öğrenciler üç kelimedenden oluşan edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanılmasına karşı olumlu tutumlar göstermişlerdir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmelerin analizi göstermiştir ki öğrenciler üç kelimedenden oluşan edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanılmasına karşı oldukça olumlu tutumlar sergilemişlerdir. Cinsiyete göre dağılım analizi ise kız öğrencilerin üç kelimedenden oluşan edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanılmasına karşı erkek öğrencilere göre daha olumlu tutumlar sergilediklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Gönderim

13 Şubat 2019

Kabul

19 Mart 2019

Anahtar kelimeler

derlem
derlem tabanlı materyaller
edat-fiiller
cinsiyet
öğrenci tutumları

Önerilen APA atf biçimi: Girgin, U. (2019). İngiliz dili ve eğitimi anabilim dalı öğrencilerinin edat-fiillerin öğrenilmesinde derlem tabanlı materyaller kullanmalarına karşı olan tutumları. *Language Teaching and Educational Research (LATER)*, 2(1), 1-19.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35207/later.526730>

Introduction

A corpus is a collection of texts which is used for linguistic analysis. These texts are generally assumed to be representative of a given language (Francis, 1982). Although the use of corpora in language learning and teaching has created controversy among linguists, it is widely acknowledged as beneficial for language learners (Biber & Reppen, 2002; Chambers, 2007; Hill, 2000; Hunston, 2002). It increases the meaningful input for learners, as they get familiar with real authentic language. In addition, by seeing empirical descriptions of language use, learners can be aware of the pattern frequency and usage of register-based forms and words in a language (Biber & Reppen, 2002). As such, language is described for learners through the use of corpora in language classes (Hunston, 2002).

Over the years, many studies have incorporated corpora into language teachers' skill teaching practices by adapting new trends like concordancing (i.e., concordance lines), DDL (Data-Driven Learning), or a corpus-based approach (e.g., Ashkan & Seyyedrezaei, 2016; Girgin, 2011, 2019; Barabadi & Khajavi, 2017; Chao, 2010; Koosha & Jafarpour, 2006; Paker & Ergül-Özcan, 2017; Sun & Wang, 2003; Tekin & Soruç, 2016; Uçar & Yükselir, 2015; Vannestal & Lindquist, 2007; Yılmaz & Soruç, 2015). While concordancing is used as a method to help learners study corpora through a computer program, which presents concordance lines for language analysis, DDL is an approach in which concordance lines are implemented with an aim to help learners identify a particular language phenomenon. A corpus-based approach, on the other hand, differs from concordancing and DDL in that in a corpus-based approach, according to Tognini-Bonelli (2001), corpus data are used to test existing ideas. One central finding coming from the studies is that corpora are effective with skill teaching in language classes, thereby acknowledging the use of corpora in language teaching as a valuable resource (e.g., Ashkan & Seyyedrezaei, 2016; Girgin, 2011, 2019; Barabadi & Khajavi, 2017; Chao, 2010; Koosha & Jafarpour, 2006; Paker & Ergül-Özcan, 2017; Sun & Wang, 2003; Tekin & Soruç, 2016; Uçar & Yükselir, 2015; Vannestal & Lindquist, 2007; Yılmaz & Soruç, 2015).

Based on these contributions, language teachers have started to incorporate corpora into language teaching as well as encouraging learners to exploit them in language learning. Yet, many researchers have started to question how learners feel towards using such sources in language learning. As such, several studies have started to emerge in the field with an aim to understand learners' perceptions towards using corpora in skill learning (e.g., Chao, 2010; Sun & Wang, 2003; Vannestal & Lindquist, 2007; Yoon & Hirvela, 2004). These studies have found that learners have a positive perception of using such sources in language learning.

The use of corpora in language teaching has been a focus of attention in the Turkish EFL context lately (e.g., Girgin, 2011, 2019; Paker & Ergül-Özcan, 2017; Tekin & Soruç, 2016; Uçar & Yükselir, 2015; Yılmaz & Soruç, 2015), where language teachers have started to incorporate such sources into language teaching after having had a great challenge to create authentic materials that provide real life language samples. However, observing real life language samples might be challenging and time-consuming for language learners, thereby demotivating and frustrating them (Granger & Tribble, 1998). In addition, studying with concordance lines requires learners to infer and formulate rules, which can be challenging for those who do not know how to induct information from lines (Gabel, 2001). Some of learners might not even interpret and generalize information, as concordance lines present information in different formats (Yoon & Hirvela, 2004). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, very

few studies have explored the perceptions of learners towards using such sources keeping these concerns in mind in the Turkish EFL context (e.g., Girgin, 2011; Simsek, 2016). As such, how Turkish EFL learners perceive such sources after they actually use them during their vocabulary learning is not clear. This study was conducted to further investigate this question. Therefore, by exploring the perceptions of 55 Turkish EFL learners towards using corpus-based materials in the learning of English phrasal-prepositional verbs, the current study aims to further understand their opinions about using corpora in their vocabulary learning. The study also explores gender-based differences and similarities towards using such materials to learn the phrasal-prepositional verbs.

Previous research

A majority of previous research focusing on the use of corpora in language learning have attempted to explore learners' perceptions in terms of one aspect of skill learning, vocabulary learning. More precisely, they have mostly explored the perceptions of learners towards using corpora in collocation learning (e.g., Chan & Liou, 2005; Chao, 2010).

For example, Chan and Liou (2005) explored how 32 college EFL learners in Taiwan would react to a bilingual concordancer. The purpose of the study was to find out whether the learners agreed that using such a computer program helped them to learn English verb-noun collocations. The results revealed that the learners mostly held positive attitudes towards using the concordancer to learn verb-noun collocations. In a different study, Chao (2010) also investigated how 71 Taiwanese junior high school students would think of using a concordancer in their collocation learning. The study found that the majority of the learners thought that using such a computer program in the learning of the collocations was effective.

Chujo, Utiyama and Miura (2006), on the other hand, investigated how 72 beginner level EFL learners would react to using concordance-based activities in their vocabulary learning. The purpose of their study was also to find out if the learners agreed that using the concordancing tool was easy. In the study, the learners were asked to note down their responses to using the tool on a daily basis. The researchers also administered a questionnaire to the learners to find out if the learners got accustomed to the tool and if they thought that the activities were helpful. The results revealed that the majority of the learners got used to using the concordancing tool. It was also found that the learners mostly held positive attitudes towards using the tool in their vocabulary learning. However, the majority of the learners indicated that it was not easy for them to use the tool.

By examining the reflections of 31 freshmen students at an English Language Teaching (ELT) department in Turkey, Simsek (2016) investigated the perceptions of EFL learners towards a six-week corpus-based implementation conducted to teach transitional adverbials. The reflections were taken through minute papers collected each week and a semi-structured interview. The results showed that while the learners found the corpus-based implementation effective, motivating, and interesting, they indicated that the concordance lines were difficult to understand. However, the learners had a positive perception of corpus-based language teaching.

In the light of these contributions, it can be claimed that corpora have been used in language classes to teach vocabulary items (e.g., collocations) to EFL learners. They have been

reported to have had a positive perception of using corpora in their English vocabulary learning. As this study also aims to further understanding the Turkish learners' perceptions towards using corpus-based materials in their English phrasal-prepositional verb learning, it adds on the previous research in two ways. Firstly, it aims to further explore if Turkish students hold the same feelings towards using such sources in their English vocabulary learning. Secondly, it aims to reveal if learners of English find using such sources easy and effective with their phrasal-prepositional verb learning, another aspect of vocabulary learning and the learning of which constitutes a challenge for students (Ganji, 2011; Side, 1990). In addition, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, an investigation of gender-based differences and similarities in any aspect of skill learning through corpus-based materials has not been a focus of attention. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to further understand the perceptions of Turkish learners towards using corpus-based materials in their English phrasal-prepositional verb learning, and explore gender-based differences and similarities towards using such materials in the learning of the phrasal-prepositional verbs.

In particular, the current study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL learners towards studying with corpus-based materials while learning English phrasal-prepositional verbs?
2. Are there any differences and similarities between the perceptions of male and female learners towards studying with corpus-based materials while learning English phrasal-prepositional verbs?

Methodology

In order to explore the perceptions of the learners towards learning English phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials, the study adopted a mixed method approach. The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire, and the qualitative data were collected through focus group interviews. 40 phrasal-prepositional verbs were selected from Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (Courtney, 1983) and instructed via corpus-based materials for six hours over a period of three weeks. The questionnaire was given to the learners right after the instruction. The interviews were conducted following the analysis of the questionnaire data. The data collected from the questionnaire with regard to the perceptions of the learners were also analyzed to check the differences and similarities between male and female students. This section firstly introduces the setting and participants of the study. Instruments used in the study are presented in turn. Lastly, data collection and analysis procedures are summarized briefly.

Setting

The study was conducted at Erciyes University, in the department of English language teaching (ELT) in Turkey. The department offers courses for students who want to be teachers of English in primary or high schools in Turkey. All students should complete a four-year study to obtain a degree from the department.

Participants

Fifty-five upper-intermediate level learners of English from two intact classes took part in the study. The participants were in their first year and were taking the *Contextual Grammar I* course. The course is offered in two sections in the department, and each section has around 30 students. Forty-three of the students were female and 12 of them were male. The learners were socio-linguistically homogenous, as all of them were born and raised in Turkey.

Instruments

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was adapted from Girgin (2011). As can be seen in Appendix A, the questionnaire has 15 Likert scale questions as well as capturing the students' demographic data (i.e., gender), and each question contains six options.

The items in the questionnaire aimed to reveal a range of opinions regarding how the learners perceived using corpus-based materials in their vocabulary learning. For example, while items 1 and 2 aimed to reveal their opinions about the degree of the difficulty and usefulness of the materials, items 3 and 4 aimed to reveal their opinions about the difficulty and boringness of using the materials in comparison to using a dictionary. Items 5 and 6, on the other hand, aimed to reveal their opinions about their own participation in the course and if they thought using the materials boosted their confidence in English phrasal-prepositional verb learning. Items 7 and 8 aimed to reveal the learners' opinions regarding if they thought using the materials improved their phrasal-prepositional verb knowledge and their preferences (i.e., corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary), whereas items 9, 10, and 11 aimed to reveal their opinions about the helpfulness of using the materials in comparison to using a dictionary and their attitudes and recommendations. Items 12, 13, 14, and 15 were constructed by the researcher for the needs of the current study. While items 12, 13, and 14 aimed to reveal the learners' opinions regarding the effectiveness of the materials in helping them understand the forms and metaphorical meanings of the verbs, as well as constructing the correct forms of the verbs in order to use them while paraphrasing sentences, item 15 aimed to reveal their opinions about the difficulty of using the materials in understanding the metaphorical meanings of the verbs in comparison to using a dictionary. The reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was .87.

Interviews

The learners' perceptions towards using corpus-based materials in phrasal-prepositional verb learning were further explored through audiotaped focus group interviews, which were conducted after the analysis of the questionnaire. The selection of the learners was based on the results of the questionnaire. Three learners with the highest, lowest, and neutral attitudes towards using corpus-based materials from each class were asked to participate respectively. In total, six learners were included in the interviews, which were held in two different focus groups with three learners in each and conducted in English. Focus group interviews may be held in the mother tongue of participants, as in this way, one can avoid data loss, which can potentially result from participants' language skills. However, for this study, it was deemed

appropriate to conduct the interviews in the L2 (English), as the participants were at their higher levels of language proficiency. Yet, it is possible that they could not communicate what they aimed effectively. Therefore, this might be a limitation of the study.

After informing the learners about why they were selected for the interviews, seven questions were asked one by one. To facilitate the interaction between the learners, probes were given without expressing any value on the answers received. The duration of each interview session was one and half hour. Six of the questions were repeated questions that were previously asked in the questionnaire, as it was found that more information was needed from the learners on them after the analysis of the questionnaire. Two of these questions aimed to further reveal the learners' opinions about the difficulty and boringness of using the materials in comparison to using a dictionary. One of the questions aimed to further reveal the learners' opinions regarding if they thought using the materials boosted their confidence in English phrasal-prepositional verb learning. The rest of the questions aimed to further reveal the learners' opinions about their own participation, attitudes, and recommendations. The last question aimed to reveal the learners' opinions about the difficulty of using the concordance lines in understanding the forms and metaphorical meanings of the verbs.

The corpus and corpus-based materials

The current study used the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies, n.d.) to prepare the materials (i.e., corpus-based materials) for the instruction. Several concordance lines taken from the corpus were used with an aim to help the learners see the usage of the targeted phrasal-prepositional verbs in their real contexts in order to understand the form of the verbs, to discover the meaning of them, and to use the correct form of them while rewriting sentences. As such, for the current study, the concordance lines, which include the usage of the phrasal-prepositional verbs, were prepared beforehand and used for presentation, discovery, and practice purposes.

After taking the concordance lines from the corpus, the materials were prepared. The materials consisted of four sets of papers each of which included 20 concordance lines in which 10 phrasal-prepositional verbs were seen in their real usages and five tasks that included the *form*, *meaning*, and *use* activities of the verbs. For 'form recognition' activity, the participants were required to analyze the concordance lines and discover the form of the verbs by paying attention to their specific features (i.e., verb + adverb particle + preposition + noun phrase). For 'meaning discovery' activity, upon discovering the meanings of the verbs from the concordance lines, the learners were required to complete a 'meaning-matching' activity and practice the meanings of the verbs with 10 meaning-based multiple-choice questions. For 'use' activity, the learners were required to paraphrase 10 sentences by choosing a verb, a particle, and a preposition from a list of verbs, particles, and prepositions, thereby constructing the correct forms of the phrasal-prepositional verbs to use in sentence rewriting.

Data collection procedure

In order to explore the learners' perceptions towards learning phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials, 40 phrasal-prepositional verbs were selected from Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (Courtney, 1983) and instructed via corpus-based materials for six hours over a period of three weeks.

The participants in the current study were not familiar with a corpus and corpus-based materials used in language learning. Therefore, a one-hour demo lesson was presented to the learners. In this demo class, the corpus, COCA, and concordance lines were introduced.

For ‘form recognition’ activity, the learners deducted the specific features of the verbs (i.e., verb + adverb particle + preposition + noun phrase) from the concordance lines, thereby discovering the forms of them on their own. In addition, they discovered the meanings of the verbs from the lines to complete the ‘meaning discovery’ section. They practiced the meaning and usage of the verbs with 10 meaning-based multiple-choice questions and 10 usage-based sentence rewrite questions.

The teacher, who was also the researcher, administered the questionnaire to the learners after the instruction and conducted the interviews, following the analysis of the questionnaire data.

Data analysis procedure

This study adopted a mixed method approach to explore the learners’ perceptions towards using corpus-based materials in vocabulary learning. As such, the study used descriptive analysis for the questionnaire data, examining the items’ mean scores. This was followed by the analysis of the interviews. The data collected from the questionnaire with regard to the perceptions of the learners were also analyzed to check the differences and similarities between male and female learners.

Results

Learners’ perceptions towards using corpus-based materials in English phrasal-prepositional verbs learning

In order to understand the perceptions of the learners, the mean scores of the items of the questionnaire were examined. The overall mean was initially calculated by reversing three of the items (i.e., items 3, 4, and 15), so that a higher response for all of the items indicates a better opinion. Table 1 shows the overall mean, which indicates that the learners had somewhat a positive perception of using corpus-based materials in their phrasal-prepositional verbs learning (mean value: 3.72).

Table 1. Learners’ perceptions towards using corpus-based materials in English phrasal-prepositional verbs learning (N= 55)

Items	M	SD
1. Difficulty	2.83	1.03
2. Usefulness	3.94	1.19
3. More difficult (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	4.34	1.43
4. More boring (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	4.52	1.38
5. The learners’ participation	3.29	.95
6. Improving the learners’ phrasal-prepositional verb knowledge	3.50	1.06
7. Increasing the learners’ confidence	3.32	1.18

8. Preferences (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	4.10	1.32
9. More helpful (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	4.14	1.32
10. The learners' attitudes	3.69	1.27
11. The learners' recommendations	3.98	1.38
12. Understanding the form of phrasal-prepositional verbs	3.72	1.28
13. Difficulty in understanding the metaphorical meanings	2.98	1.13
14. Constructing the correct form of phrasal-prepositional verbs to use them in sentence rewriting	3.29	1.03
15. More difficult (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary) to understand the metaphorical meanings of phrasal-prepositional verbs	4.20	1.49
Overall Mean	3.72	.74

As can be seen in the table, the mean score for the first item indicates that the majority of the learners found learning the phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials somewhat difficult (M= 2.83). However, the mean score for the third item indicates that the majority of them did not think that learning the verbs via the materials was more difficult than learning them via a dictionary (M= 4.34). Additionally, the mean score for the last item in the questionnaire indicates that the majority of the learners also did not think that using the materials was more difficult than using a dictionary to understand the metaphorical meanings of the verbs (M= 4.20).

When the learners in the interview sessions were asked to compare the difficulty of using the materials to using a dictionary, all of them agreed that using the materials to learn the verbs was not more difficult than using a dictionary to learn them. For example, Student 1 from focus group 2 made a comparison between using corpus-based materials and using a dictionary in terms of understanding the forms and metaphorical meanings of the verbs in the following way:

I think that deducing the forms and meanings of the verbs through analyzing the sentences in the concordance lines is easier than learning them through a dictionary, because learning the meanings of the verbs from a dictionary does not mean that one can learn the meanings of them permanently. That is, learning the meanings and the forms of the verbs from a dictionary means that one can only memorize them temporarily. (Student 1, focus group 2)

This response shows that the learner was able to learn the forms and the metaphorical meanings of the verbs more easily and permanently through using corpus-based materials, especially through the example sentences that the concordance lines present. Yet, two of the learners in the same focus group stated that it was difficult for them to use corpus-based materials to learn the verbs, because they failed to understand the meanings of the majority of the verbs easily through these materials due to the high frequency unknown words in the lines. They stated that they would learn the meanings and the forms of the verbs easily through a dictionary, because they think that what they have to do is just to look up the verbs in a dictionary and memorize them.

Based on these results, it is fair to state that the majority of the learners thought that using the materials was not more difficult than using a dictionary to learn the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English. However, the learners' answers to question 13 indicate that they mostly did not agree that they did not have any difficulty in understanding the metaphorical meanings of the verbs (M= 2.98). Despite this, their answers to questions 12 and 14 indicate that they mostly agreed that through the materials, they were able to understand the forms of the verbs (M= 3.72) and construct the correct forms of them in order to use them while paraphrasing sentences (M= 3.29) somewhat easily.

The learners in the interview sessions were also asked to indicate their opinions about if they had had any difficulty while analyzing the concordance lines to understand the forms and metaphorical meanings of the verbs. Their answers were somewhat similar to each other. Student 5 from focus group 2, for example, stated:

“When I saw several sentences lined-up as the concordance lines, I did not quite get what I was supposed to do with them. In addition, some of the sentences did not make sense at all. Therefore, I held somewhat negative attitudes towards using them to learn the structures. However, with the help of the teacher, it started to become easier to analyze them and understand the forms and meanings of the verbs.”(Student 5, focus group 2)

This response shows that understanding the sentences in the lines was initially very challenging for the learner, and with the help of the teacher, he could understand what to do with them. Therefore, it is fair to state that the learners needed guidance from the teacher in order to analyze the concordance lines and understand the structures in them.

The mean score for the second item in the table indicates that the learners mostly agreed that using the materials was useful for learning the phrasal-prepositional verbs (M= 3.94). In addition, the mean score for item 9 indicates that the learners mostly thought that it was more helpful to use the materials to learn the verbs when compared to using a dictionary (M= 4.14). Therefore, it is fair to state that the majority of the learners considered the materials as useful sources in the learning of the verbs, and the majority of them thought that the materials were more helpful than a dictionary in the learning of the verbs.

The mean score for item 8 in the table indicates that the majority of the learners agreed that they would prefer using corpus-based materials to learn the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English (M= 4.10). Furthermore, the mean score for item 11 indicates that the majority of the learners thought that second language teachers should use such materials in the teaching of the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English to language learners (M= 3.98). When the learners in the interview sessions were asked about their recommendations, all of the learners agreed that teachers should use these materials while teaching the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English to language students.

The mean score for item 10 in the table indicates that the majority of the learners agreed that they had a positive perception of using the materials in the learning of the verbs (M= 3.69). This question was introduced to the learners in the interview sessions again. All of the learners stated that they found corpus-based materials beneficial in the learning of the verbs and they had

a positive perception of using the materials for learning the verbs. Some of them thought that the effects of learning via deducing the forms and metaphorical meanings of the verbs from the concordance lines on their own would last longer. The mean score for item 4 in the table indicates that the majority of the learners did not agree that it was more boring to use the materials when compared to using a dictionary in the learning of the verbs (M= 4.52). In addition, this question was asked again in the interview sessions, and none of the learners agreed that it was more boring to use the materials when compared to using a dictionary in the learning of the verbs. They thought that deriving the meanings and the forms of the verbs from the concordance lines was something new for them.

The mean score for item 6 in the table indicates that the learners mostly agreed that using the materials somewhat improved their phrasal-prepositional verb knowledge (M= 3.50). In addition, the mean score for item 7 indicates that the majority of them agreed that using the materials somewhat boosted their confidence in learning the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English (M= 3.32). This question was asked again in the interview sessions, and all of the learners agreed that using the materials boosted their confidence in learning the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English. They thought that it would be possible to learn the meanings and the forms of the verbs via these materials. Additionally, they thought that they would be able to recognize them in native speakers' written texts or speech.

Lastly, the mean score for item 5 in the table indicates that the majority of the learners thought that they were somewhat active in the course (M= 3.29). . This question was asked again in the interview sessions, and all of the learners agreed that they participated actively in the course while studying with the materials to learn the verbs. They stated that they had to participate automatically, because the activities in the materials were learner-centered, thereby pushing them to explain the forms or give the correct answers to the questions that the materials included.

Gender-based differences and similarities in using corpus-based materials

The data collected from the questionnaire with regard to the perceptions of the learners were analyzed to check the differences and similarities between the male and female learners. In the analysis, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Since it was found that the data were normally distributed, the overall mean scores and the mean scores of the male and female learners for each item in the questionnaire were compared using Independent Sample T-Test. Table 2 presents the means and overall means with regard to the perceptions of the male and female learners for items 1-15 in the questionnaire.

Table 2. Differences and similarities between the perceptions of the male (N= 12) and female (N= 43) learners towards using corpus-based materials

Items	Male		Female		df	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
1. Difficulty	2.50	.51	2.93	1.12	11	1.90	.205
2. Usefulness	3.33	.88	4.12	1.21	11	2.51	.043
3. More difficult (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	3.91	1.37	4.46	1.43	11	1.21	.244
4. More boring (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	3.33	1.37	4.86	1.20	11	3.51	.000
5. The learners' participation	3.25	1.05	3.30	.93	11	.14	.869
6. Improving the learners' phrasal-prepositional verb knowledge	3.33	.98	3.56	1.09	11	.70	.525
7. Increasing the learners' confidence	3.08	.90	3.40	1.25	11	.99	.426
8. Preferences (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	3.33	1.61	4.33	1.16	11	2.01	.021
9. More helpful (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary)	3.58	1.62	4.30	1.20	11	1.43	.097
10. The learners' attitudes	3.42	1.16	3.77	1.30	11	.89	.404
11. The learners' recommendations	3.58	1.44	4.09	1.36	11	1.09	.262
12. Understanding the form of phrasal-prepositional verbs	3.08	1.44	3.91	1.19	11	1.82	.048
13. Difficulty in understanding the metaphorical meanings	2.67	.88	3.07	1.18	11	1.28	.279
14. Constructing the correct form of phrasal-prepositional verbs to use them in sentence rewriting	2.83	1.26	3.42	.93	11	1.51	.082
15. More difficult (corpus-based materials vs. a dictionary) to understand the metaphorical meanings of phrasal-prepositional verbs	3.91	1.56	4.27	1.48	11	.71	.463
Overall Mean	3.27	.79	3.85	.69	11	2.30	.017

As can be seen in the table, there is a significant difference between the overall mean scores of the male and female learners. That is, the female learners' attitudes (M=3.85) are significantly more positive than those of the male learners (M=3.27) towards using the materials to learn the phrasal-prepositional verbs ($t(11)=2.30, p<.05$).

As data in the table indicate, there are significant differences between the mean scores of the male and female learners in terms of items 2, 4, 8, and 12. The comparison of the mean scores of the male and female learners for item 2 indicates that the female learners (M= 4.12) hold significantly higher positive attitudes than the male learners (M= 3.33) in terms of finding the use of the materials in the learning of the phrasal-prepositional verbs useful ($t(11)= 2.51, p<.05$). Additionally, the comparison of the mean scores of the male and female learners for item 4 indicates that the male learners (M= 3.33) found using the materials (in comparison to using a dictionary) significantly more boring than the female learners (M= 4.86) in the learning of the phrasal-prepositional verbs ($t(11)= 3.51, p<.05$). Further, the comparison of the mean

scores for item 8 indicates that the female learners (M= 4.33) hold significantly higher positive attitudes than the male learners (M= 3.33) with regard to preferring using the materials to learn the phrasal-prepositional verbs of English to using a dictionary ($t(11)= 2.01, p<.05$). Lastly, the comparison of the mean scores for item 12 indicates that the female learners (M= 3.91) hold significantly higher positive attitudes than the male learners (M= 3.08) in terms of understanding the forms of the phrasal-prepositional verbs easily by using corpus-based materials ($t(11)= 1.82, p<.05$).

There are no significant differences between the mean scores of the male and female learners in terms of the other items in the questionnaire. However, it should be noted that the mean scores of the female learners are higher than those of the male learners for all of the items in the questionnaire. Thus, it can be concluded that the female learners in the current study hold a higher positive perception of using corpus-based materials in the learning of the phrasal-prepositional verbs than the male learners.

Discussion

The results of the questionnaire indicated that the learners had somewhat a positive perception of using corpus-based materials in their L2 phrasal-prepositional verbs learning. The results of the interviews also showed that they held positive attitudes towards using such materials in the learning of the verbs, thereby supporting the questionnaire data. It should be remembered that one of the rationales behind the use of corpora in phrasal-prepositional verbs learning for the study is to help the learners see the information included in the concordance lines and derive the necessary rules (e.g., form, meaning) for the verbs. It is interesting to note that the learners found using corpus-based materials in their phrasal-prepositional verbs learning useful, thereby agreeing that using such materials in L2 phrasal-prepositional verbs instruction achieved this function. Additionally, they agreed that the materials helped them to learn the verbs better than a dictionary. This might suggest that the learners felt that corpus-based materials and a dictionary were not equal in terms of teaching them L2 vocabulary items. That is to say, whereas a dictionary presents the meanings of vocabulary items for memorization, corpus-based materials require learners to discover meanings by observing concordance lines on their own, thereby the latter being acknowledged by the learners in the current study as more helpful. This might also explain why they agreed that they would prefer using corpus-based materials in English phrasal-prepositional verbs learning and it would be a good idea for teachers to use corpus-based materials in English phrasal-prepositional verbs instruction. These findings confirm the findings of the studies of Chao (2010) and Chujo, Utiyama and Miura (2006). Chujo, Utiyama and Miura found that learners agreed that using concordance-based activities was helpful for learning vocabulary. Similarly, Chao found that learners mostly agreed that using concordancing in collocation learning was effective. Additionally, the findings are also in line with the findings of the study of Simsek (2016), who found that learners mostly agreed that corpus-based implementation was effective.

On the whole, the learners thought that they enjoyed using corpus-based materials in the learning of the verbs. They mostly agreed that using the materials in the learning of the verbs was not more boring than using a dictionary. This might be linked to the fact that 'boringness' is associated with learners' memorization of vocabulary items from a dictionary, as there are no specific tasks in a dictionary to study vocabulary items. Studying the concordance

lines and working on the different tasks might have been interesting for the learners. The learners' responses to the same question in the interviews supported this fact; these learners stated that deriving the meanings and forms of the verbs from the concordance lines was something new for them. This might also explain why the learners thought that they participated actively in the course while studying the verbs through the materials. Using such materials might have pushed them to get involved in the course. The learners' responses to the same question in the interviews supported this fact; these learners stated that they had to participate automatically, because the activities in the materials were learner-centered, thereby pushing them to explain the forms or give the correct answers to the questions that the materials included. In addition, 'involvement' might have been associated with 'learning' or 'gaining' in the learners' minds, as they mostly agreed that using the materials improved their L2 phrasal-prepositional verbs knowledge, as well as boosting their confidence in learning them. These findings confirm the findings of the studies of Chan and Liou (2005) and Simsek (2016). Chan and Liou found that learners enjoyed using a bilingual concordancer in the learning of verb-noun collocations. Similarly, Simsek found that learners agreed that corpus-based implementation was motivating and interesting.

It was seen that the learners found learning the phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials difficult. This could stem from the fact that the materials in the study consisted of four sections, the concordance lines, *form*, *meaning*, and *use* activities. Apart from analyzing the concordance lines, the other tasks might have been somewhat easy for the learners to deal with. The learners' responses in the interview sessions supported this fact; these learners stated that dealing with the concordance lines seemed very challenging for them. Additionally, they stated that they needed guidance or help from the teacher in order to analyze and understand the concordance lines. These findings are in line with the findings of Simsek (2016), who found that learners agreed that concordance lines were difficult to understand. However, the learners in the current study did not think that learning the verbs via the materials was more difficult than learning them via a dictionary. This might suggest that the learners were able to make a clear distinction between corpus-based materials and a dictionary in terms of what they aimed to achieve. The learners' responses to this question in the interview sessions supported this fact; these learners stated that they were able to learn the verbs more easily and permanently through using corpus-based materials, and learning the verbs through using a dictionary would only mean that one could memorize them temporarily.

It was also seen that the learners agreed that through the materials, they were able to understand the forms of the verbs and construct the correct forms of them in order to use them while paraphrasing sentences easily. However, they did not agree that they did not have any difficulty in understanding the metaphorical meanings of the verbs. This might be due to the high-frequency unknown words in the concordance lines that the learners might have had difficulty in understanding, thereby having a strong influence on the misunderstanding of the phrasal-prepositional verbs. Two of the learners' responses in the interview sessions supported this fact; these learners stated that it was difficult for them to use corpus-based materials to learn the verbs, because they failed to understand the meanings of the majority of the verbs easily through these materials due to the high frequency unknown words in the lines.

Conclusion

The current study showed that Turkish EFL learners had somewhat positive perceptions of using corpus-based materials in their L2 phrasal-prepositional verbs learning. Gender differences that emerged from the study demonstrated that the female learners had higher positive perceptions of using corpus-based materials in the learning of the verbs than the male learners.

This study provides further evidence that Turkish EFL learners feel that using corpora in language learning is an effective approach. Therefore, language teachers questioning whether to use corpora in language classes in the Turkish EFL context can make use of such sources to help their learners learn different aspects of vocabulary in English. In the study, for each target item, corpus-based activities were prepared by taking several concordance lines from the corpus and preparing *form*, *meaning*, and *use* activities, in which several sentences were also taken from the corpus. Thus, if language teachers who want to make use of corpus-based sources to teach English vocabulary items to language learners are informed about these designs and principles, they can create their own sources to help learners learn different aspects of vocabulary in English. Since the data in the study revealed that the learners tended to be bored with using a dictionary to learn L2 phrasal-prepositional verbs, it can also be suggested that language teachers can use such sources to break up the routine in language classes and make language learning more interesting for learners. Curriculum designers might also want to consider incorporating such materials and activities for language learners in language programs to teach different aspects of vocabulary in English.

However, there are some important points emerging from the study. Firstly, it can be suggested that since the data revealed that dealing with the concordance lines was a challenge for the learners, language teachers might consider supporting learning by giving guidance through 'leading questions', which might help learners derive the necessary rules from concordance lines easily. Secondly, it can also be suggested that since the data revealed that some learners failed to understand the concordance lines due to the high frequency unknown words, language teachers might consider supporting learning by guiding learners through high frequency unknown words that concordance lines include.

In conclusion, it should be noted that since the current study was conducted with the learners who were at their higher levels of language proficiency, future research should concentrate on learners at lower levels of language proficiency and from different backgrounds (e.g., learners who are learning English as a second language (ESL), learners who use English for academic purposes (EAP), and learners who use English for specific purposes (ESP)) in order to determine whether the conclusions coming from the current study hold true for learners from those different backgrounds.

References

- Ashkan, L., & Seyyedrezaei, S. H. (2016). The effect of corpus-based language teaching on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6(4), 190-196. DOI: 10.5539/ijel.v6n4p190
- Barabadi, E., & Khajavi, Y. (2017). The effect of data-driven approach to teaching vocabulary on Iranian students' learning of English vocabulary. *Cogent Education*, 4(1), 1-13. DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2017.1283876

- Biber, D., & Reppen, R. (2002). What does frequency have to do with grammar teaching? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24, 199-208. DOI:10.1017/S0272263102002048
- Chambers, A. (2007). Integrating corpora in language learning and teaching. *ReCALL*, 19(3), 249-251. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344007000134>
- Chan, T., & Liou, H. (2005). Effects of web-based concordancing instruction on EFL students' learning of verb-noun collocations. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 18(3), 231-250. DOI: 10.1080/09588220500185769
- Chao, P. (2010). *A study of collocation learning of junior high students in Taiwan via concordance*. Paper presented at the 2010 international conference on English teaching, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Retrieved 02.06.2018, from http://www2.kuas.edu.tw/edu/afl/20100430Final/Word/2010comp_EPCA.pdf.
- Chujo, K., Utiyama, M., & Miura, S. (2006). Using a Japanese-English parallel corpus for teaching English vocabulary to beginning-level students. *English Corpus Studies*, 13, 153-172. URL: http://www5d.biglobe.ne.jp/chujo/data/06_English_Corpus_Studies.pdf
- Courtney, R. (1983). *Longman dictionary of phrasal verbs*. England: Longman Group Limited.
- Davies, M. (n.d.). The corpus of contemporary American English (COCA): 560 million words (1990-2017). Available online at <http://www.americancorpus.org>.
- Francis, W. N. (1982). Problems of assembling and computerizing large corpora. In S. Johansson (Ed.), *Computer corpora in English language research* (pp. 7-24). Bergen: Norwegian Computing Centre for the Humanities.
- Gabel, S. (2001). Over-indulgence and under-representation in interlanguage: Reflections on the utilization of concordancers in self-directed foreign language learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 14, 269-288. DOI:10.1076/call.14.3.269.5792
- Girgin, U. (2011). *Corpus-based activities at lower levels of EFL proficiency: The effectiveness of using concordance lines on grammar learning* (Unpublished master's thesis). Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey. URL: <http://www.thesis.bilkent.edu.tr/0005040.pdf>
- Girgin, U. (2019). The effectiveness of using corpus-based activities on the learning of some phrasal-prepositional verbs. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 18(1), 118-125. URL: <http://www.tojet.net/articles/v18i1/18112.pdf>
- Granger, S., & Tribble, C. (1998). Learner corpus data in the foreign language classroom: Form- focused instruction and data-driven instruction and data-driven learning. In S. Granger (Ed.), *Learner English on computer* (pp. 199-209). New York: Longman.
- Ganji, M. (2011). The best way to teach phrasal verbs: Translation, sentential contextualization or metaphorical conceptualization?. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(11), 1497-1506. DOI: 10.4304/tpls.1.11.1497-1506
- Hill, J. (2000). Revising priorities: From grammatical failure to collocational success. In M. Lewis (Ed.), *Teaching collocation: Further development in the lexical approach* (pp. 47-69). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpora in applied linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Paker, T., & Ergül-Özcan, Y. (2017). The effectiveness of using corpus-based materials in vocabulary teaching. *International Journal of Language Academy*, 5(1), 62-81. URL: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED573215.pdf>
- Side, R. (1990). Phrasal verbs: Sorting them out. *ELT*, 44(2), 144-159. DOI: [10.1093/elt/44.2.144](https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/44.2.144)
- Simsek, T. (2016). Turkish EFL learners' reflections on corpus-based language teaching. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 6(1), 21-27. DOI: 10.18844/gjflt.v6i1.806
- Sun, Y-C., & Wang, L-Y. (2003). Concordancers in the EFL classroom: Cognitive approaches and collocation difficulty. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 16(1), 83-94. DOI:

10.1076/call.16.1.83.15528

- Tekin, B., & Soruç, A. (2016). Using corpus-assisted learning activities to assist vocabulary development in English. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology, Special Issue*, 1270–1283.
- Tognini-Bonelli, E. (2001). *Corpus linguistics at work*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Uçar, S., & Yükselir, C. (2015). The effect of corpus-based activities on verb-noun collocations in EFL classes. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 14(2), 195–205.
- Vannestal, M. E., & Lindquist, H. (2007). Learning English grammar with a corpus: Experimenting with concordancing in a university grammar course. *ReCALL*, 19(3), 329-350. DOI: [10.1017/S0958344007000638](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344007000638)
- Yılmaz, E., & Soruç, A. (2015). The use of concordance for teaching vocabulary: A data-driven learning approach. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 2626–2630. DOI: [10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.400](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.400)
- Yoon, H., & Hirvela, A. (2004). ESL student attitudes toward corpus use in L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13, 257-283. DOI: [10.1016/j.jslw.2004.06.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.06.002)

Appendix A. Questionnaire

Please read the statements below carefully and circle the number that best describes you.

Please specify your gender first!

What is your gender? a. Male b. Female

1. What do you think about the difficulty of learning some phrasal-prepositional verbs of English through corpus-based materials?

Very difficult ←————→ Very easy
1 2 3 4 5 6

2. How useful do you find learning some phrasal-prepositional verbs of English through corpus-based materials?

Very useless ←————→ Very useful
1 2 3 4 5 6

3. I think that learning English phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials is more difficult than learning them through a dictionary.

Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6

4. I think that learning English phrasal-prepositional verbs through corpus-based materials is more boring than learning them through a dictionary.

Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6

5. How do you evaluate your own participation in the course while learning some English phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials?

Very inactive ←————→ Very active
1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Using corpus-based materials in the learning of some English phrasal-prepositional verbs improved my phrasal-prepositional verb knowledge.

Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Using corpus-based materials in the learning of some English phrasal-prepositional verbs increased my confidence about learning phrasal-prepositional verbs of English.

Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6

8. I prefer using corpus-based materials in the learning of English phrasal-prepositional verbs to using a dictionary in learning of English phrasal-prepositional verbs.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
9. I think that corpus-based materials are more helpful than a dictionary in the learning of English phrasal-prepositional verbs.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. I really felt positively towards using corpus-based materials in the learning of some English phrasal-prepositional verbs.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
11. I recommend that language teachers should use corpus-based materials so as to teach language learners phrasal-prepositional verbs of English.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. I was able to understand the forms of the phrasal-prepositional verbs easily by using corpus-based materials.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. I did not have any difficulty in understanding the metaphorical meanings of the phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. I was able to construct the correct forms of the phrasal-prepositional verbs easily via corpus-based materials in order to use them while paraphrasing sentences.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. I think that understanding the metaphorical meanings of English phrasal-prepositional verbs via corpus-based materials is more difficult than understanding them through a dictionary.
- Strongly disagree ←————→ Strongly agree
- 1 2 3 4 5 6